



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

DEFENSE FISHERIES ADMINISTRATION

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DEFENSE FISHERIES ADMINISTRATION SOON TO BE ACTIVATED

An action program for the new Defense Fisheries Administration, formally established on December 4, is rapidly being shaped up and a staff of fishery experts from the Fish and Wildlife Service has been detailed to organize the program, Secretary of the Interior Oscar L. Chapman said today.

Secretary Chapman has appointed Albert M. Day, Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service as Administrator of the new agency. Mr. Day will name Milton C. James as Deputy Administrator, Fred F. Johnson as program director, and Leroy S. Christey as assistant program director.

"All of these men," stated Mr. Day, "served in various capacities during World War II in the coordination of fisheries and are well qualified to handle their new assignments because of their extensive experience in Federal fisheries work, their intimate knowledge of the problems involved, and their wide acquaintance in the fishing industry."

Milton C. James, who became an Assistant Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service in 1945, has been with the agency since 1923. During World War II he was detached from his regular duties as Chief of the Branch of Game-fish and Hatcheries and detailed to Washington, D. C. as one of three Coordination Officers in OCF, supervising the activities of the Facilities Branch.

Fred Johnson, Assistant Chief of the Service's Branch of Commercial Fisheries has been with the agency since 1920. In 1935 he became Assistant Chief. As a reserve officer in the U. S. Navy, he was called to active duty in April 1942 and served during the war as liaison officer between the Navy and the War Production Board and the Departments of Agriculture and Interior on matters pertaining to the procurement and distribution of fishery products. In 1944 Commander Johnson's detail was broadened to permit him to advise the Office of the Coordinator of Fisheries on problems that interfered with the maximum production of fishery commodities. These included the charter or purchase, or the return of, fishing vessels by the armed forces; the construction program for new fishing vessels; the allocation of fishing vessels between ports in controlled production programs; and applications and recommendations for controlled and critical materials.

Mr. Johnson returned to his former position with the Service in December 1945. In April 1948, he was assigned to Portland, Oregon, as Assistant Regional Director. When the Pacific Oceanic Fishery Investigations, headquartered in Honolulu, Hawaii, got under way late in 1948, he was transferred to that program as its Assistant Director. In June 1950, he was recalled to Washington, D. C., to assist in handling the Service's expanding program of commercial fishery activities.

Leroy Christey joined the Service in 1934, after his graduation from the University of Washington where he was an economics major. His early assignments included fishery research in Alaska and at the Fishery Technological Laboratory in Seattle. In 1940 he returned to Alaska as leader of the King crab investigations. In December 1942, he was detailed to the Washington Office of OCF where he was concerned with the handling of priorities and materials and equipment requirements for the fishing industry. In April 1945, he resigned from the Service to become general manager of the Pacific Exploration Company in Seattle, Washington, which was engaged in exploratory fishing operations.

On November 1, 1948, upon his return to the Service, Christey was appointed as Deputy Administrator of the Philippine Fishery Program in Manila. In April 1950, when this program was being terminated, he joined the Fisheries Division of SCAP in Tokyo as an industrial specialist and head of the Branch of Materials and Facilities. On October 31, he transferred to the Service's Office of Foreign Activities in Washington to assist in planning Point Four programs.

Defense responsibilities consisting of certain priority, allocation, claimant, requisitioning, and other functions as related to fish production, were delegated to Secretary Chapman by the Secretary of Agriculture, Charles F. Brannan, on October 13. Under the Defense Production Act of 1950, basic responsibilities for food were entrusted to the Department of Agriculture by the President's Executive Order No. 10161, of September 9, 1950.

In addition, the delegation enables the Secretary of the Interior, through the Defense Fisheries Administration, to encourage production of fishery commodities to fulfill requirements for military, essential civilian, and foreign needs, as these may be determined by the Secretary of Agriculture. Responsibility for tin container supply and materials and facilities used in common for processing fish and other foods, and for fish procurement and distribution, are retained by the Secretary of Agriculture.

Mr. Day listed some of the things that the Defense Fisheries Administration intends to do about keeping fishery commodities in sufficient supply to satisfy the country's emergency needs.

"First on the list will probably be the job of trying to keep the fishing industry supplied with the steel, copper, brass, zinc, aluminum, fibers, and other strategic materials and facilities, as well as manpower, which it requires to produce the fishery products the country must have. We must see, however, that no more of such materials are diverted to fishery production than are justified in the light of other defense requirements.

"Following the pattern established during World War II, the statistical, marketing, and other economic data which are regularly collected by the Fish and Wildlife Service will be augmented to lay basis for setting production goals, estimating potential food supplies, developing estimates of the industry's requirements for scarce materials, and for determining the desirability of fish allocation and concentration programs."

Dr. Day recalled that during World War II, fish allocation programs were carried out for sardines in California and halibut in the Pacific Northwest. The sardine allocation program provided for the even distribution of raw fish to plants in California, thus reducing gluts and providing maximum production. The halibut allocation program, by restricting primary handlers to those of historical record,

tended to keep distribution in normal Nation-wide channels. In Alaska, salmon concentration programs provided for the coordinated production of the packs of canned salmon in certain centrally located canneries, thus saving manpower, transportation, scarce materials, and other facilities. "These types of programs will again be placed in action, if needed," Mr. Day said.

"If critical shortages develop, investigations will be undertaken on the applicability of substitute materials for such items as containers for fishery products, fishing nets and other fishing devices, and cordage," Mr. Day added. Closely allied to these studies will be development work for improving the operation of fishing gear, and for the reduction in manpower in fishing operations.

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